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ABSTRACT

With minimal guidance and counseling from the community college system, nontraditional students attempt to engage with the educational community as they struggle to escape the poverty that has defined their own lives. Noting that college instructors are challenged to work effectively with a new generation of nontraditional students that includes growing numbers of immigrants, single parents, and returning homemakers struggling to find their way in large and unfamiliar institutions, this book draws upon interviews with 16 Latina and African American women living in poverty to examine the perspective of these women aspiring to become teachers of young children; the book also examines the personal journey of one instructor in a community college early childhood teacher preparation program. The women's stories reveal insights about learning and inclusion and the pivotal role of the classroom teacher at all levels of education. In addition to the interview findings, the book incorporates findings from other research, student narratives, classroom vignettes, and information on instructional strategies to urge educators to better integrate students' lives and voices into the curriculum. Each chapter contains endnotes. (Contains a 48-item bibliography.) (KB)

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